

WHY IS CHURCH ATTENDANCE ESSENTIAL?

There's only one reason why I preach and teach as I do concerning church attendance: **the Bible commands it!**

Say or do anything you want to, but you cannot get around Matthew 6:33 where the Lord said, "**But seek ye FIRST the kingdom of God, and his righteousness....**" FIRST does not mean second. It does not mean third. It means "before" and "above" everything else! Do you have another definition of it? If so, it's wrong.

Regardless of a person's view on things spiritual or material, God's way is what is right, not what seems right to men. Listen to the Scriptures on this point: "*There is a way that seemeth right unto a man but the end thereof are the ways of death*" (Prov. 14:12). "*O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps*" (Jer. 10:23). "*Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven*" (Matt. 7:21). "*And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say*" (Luke 6:46)?

God's way is for his people to assemble and worship him according to the pattern of the New Testament! For this very purpose, Jesus came into the world to redeem men from their sins. "*For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which is lost*" (Luke 19:10). "*For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to*

all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Titus 2:11-14).

Those who have "obeyed the gospel" have been purchased out of the world into a new life in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17). We must therefore walk worthy of our calling (Eph. 4:1). Our attention is now focused on righteousness instead of ourselves (Matt. 6:33). Only those who do and live righteousness are accepted with God (Acts 10:35).

Church attendance is essential in working righteousness because it is putting spiritual things first! Hebrews 10:25 commands, "**Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together.**" When one seeks righteousness, where else would he desire to be that could be of greater interest or benefit? How can it be said that one is putting the kingdom FIRST when he chooses to be somewhere else? Remember, the church is made up of the saved, not the lost. We have been "called out of the world" (1 Peter 2:9). It is the church the Lord is coming back to save (Eph. 5:23). How can it be preached any other way and still have God's blessing? It can't be done!

— Garland M. Robinson